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Security Council

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Letter dated 30 September 2002 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 26 September 2002, which I received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

02-61373 (E) 021002

Annex

Letter dated 26 September 2002 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the August monthly report on SFOR operations (see enclosure). I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) George **Robertson**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-31 August 2002) there were almost 15,500 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and from 15 non-NATO countries.

2. During the period under review, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to remain stable.

Security

3. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) continues to contribute towards the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina; monitor compliance by the Entity Armed Forces; conduct inspections and consolidation of weapons storage sites; provide support to the international organizations working in theatre, and to the Federation authorities in collecting weapons and ammunition within the framework of Operation Harvest; and monitor possible terrorist-related threats throughout the country.

4. SFOR continued Operation Harvest during August. In the period from 1 January to 31 August 2002, the total number of weapons and ammunition collected amounted to: 6,429 small arms (rifles, pistols and revolvers); 1,544,002 rounds of ammunition less than 20 mm; 14,034 rounds of ammunition between 20 mm and 76 mm; 2,293 rounds of ammunition more than 76 mm; 29,448 hand grenades; 3,386 mines; 6,372 kilograms of explosives; and 40,098 other items (mortars, mortar rounds, rifle grenades and handmade ordnance).

5. From 14 to 16 August, SFOR conducted ground and helicopter operations in the Republika Srpska in cooperation with the Republika Srpska's Ministry of Interior Police to target Radovan Karadzic's support network.[a]

6. On 26 August, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency restructured the Standing Committee on Military Matters, strengthening the state-level control over defence, notably removing the Entity Defence Ministers, the military commanders and the military advisers to the Presidency, and including the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Entity Presidents. In addition, the position of Secretary General of the Standing Committee will be created, and a military commission will be responsible for operational issues and doctrine. It is believed that the Standing Committee will become more effective and provide NATO and other organizations a single point of contact with Bosnia and Herzegovina for defence matters.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

7. The Entity Armed Forces carried out regular training activities during the reporting period which were generally in compliance with the military provisions of the Dayton Peace Agreement.

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[a] The Russian Federation reserves its special position on these matters.

8. During the period under review, SFOR monitored 248 training and movement activities: 127 VRS (Army of Republika Srpska); and 121 AFBIH (Army of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

9. A total of 673 mine-clearing activities were monitored over this period: 283 VRS and 390 AFBIH.

10. SFOR also carried out 98 inspections and verifications of weapons and storage sites: 40 VRS and 58 AFBIH.

11. On 2 August, SFOR confiscated almost 400,000 small arm rounds from the Military School of VRBAS and from the Krcmarie site. The amount of ammunition held at these two sites was considerably above the upper limit set by SFOR.

12. On 14 August, an inspection of the weapons and storage sites at Sarica revealed that 15 M70 rifles were missing. This is the third case of weapons theft from a VRS site reported this year. Subsequently, SFOR confiscated an additional 15 M70 rifles, pending the outcome of an internal investigation being carried out by VRS.

Cooperation with international organizations

13. Within capabilities and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre, including the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the International Police Task Force, the Office of the High Representative, the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

14. On 19 August, SFOR representatives met the Republika Srpska Air Force and Air Defence Commander to discuss the progress made in the assumption by the Republika Srpska of search and rescue duties by 1 October. While it is likely that sufficient aircrews will be trained by then, SFOR is concerned about the lack of a detailed agreement for coordinating procedures among the different agencies involved (the Departments of Civil Aviation of the Federation and of the Republika Srpska as well as the Republika Srpska Air Defence and Air Force).

15. Following the alleged border violation at the Kostajnica bridge previously reported, the border crossing between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina at Kostajnica was opened on 26 August to civilian traffic after the signature of an agreement between the two Governments. The parties continue to work towards reaching an agreement so that commercial traffic can start to use the border crossing.

16. Assistance in the form of daily patrols continues to be provided by SFOR to the Office of the High Representative and the International Police Task Force near the Inter-Entity Boundary Line in the Dobrinja area, close to Sarajevo airport.

17. SFOR provided support to the International Tribunal during exhumations in the Zvornik area in the first and third weeks of August.

Outlook

18. The security situation is expected to remain stable. Preparations for the general elections to be held at the beginning of October continue to be low key.